

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

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1. A method of using an email message to control a computer resource, comprising:  
receiving an email message from a sender;  
recognizing a reserved command word within the email message;  
interpreting the email message as a command to be carried out on an  
10 available computer resource; and  
generating a command for execution on the available computer resource.

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2. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:  
receiving a result from the available computer resource; and  
sending a reply email message communicating the result to the sender.
3. The method according to claim 2, wherein the computer resource comprises a  
computer database, the command comprises a database query and wherein the result  
comprises the result of the database query.
4. The method according to claim 1, wherein the resource comprises a computer  
database and the command comprises a database query
5. The method according to claim 1, wherein the reserved command word  
25 comprises a part of a subject portion of the email message.
6. The method according to claim 1, wherein interpreting comprises parsing the  
email message into parts defining the computer resource and the command.
- 30 7. The method according to claim 1, wherein the email from the sender originates at  
a palmtop computer.

8. The method according to claim 1, carried out on a programmed processor protected by a firewall.

5 9. The method according to claim 8, wherein the programmed processor comprises a server providing an intralan resource within the firewall.

10. The method according to claim 1, carried out by executing a set of machine readable instructions stored on an electronic storage medium.

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11. A method of using an email message to control a computer resource, comprising:  
receiving an email message from a sender, the email message originating  
at a palmtop computer;

recognizing a reserved word within a subject portion of the email

5 message;

interpreting the email message as a command to be carried out on an  
available computer resource comprising a computer database by parsing the email  
message into parts defining the computer resource and the command;

generating a command as a database query for execution on the

10 computer database;

receiving a result from the available computer database; and

sending a reply email message communicating the result to the sender.

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12. A system that uses an email message to control a computer resource from a remote location, comprising:

a first programmed processor having an email program that receives an email message from a sender;

5 a program operating on the first programmed processor that:  
recognizes a reserved command word within the email message;  
interprets the email message as a command to be carried out on an available computer resource; and  
generates a command for execution on the available computer resource.

10 13. The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the program further:  
receives a result from the available computer resource; and  
sends a reply email message communicating the result to the sender.

15 14. The apparatus according to claim 13, wherein the computer resource comprises a computer database, the command comprises a database query and wherein the result comprises the result of the database query.

20 15. The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the reserved command word comprises a part of a subject portion of the email message.

16. The apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising a palmtop computer wherein the email from the sender originates at the palmtop computer.

25 17. The apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising a second programmed processor wherein the email from the sender originates at the second programmed processor.

30 18. The apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising a firewall protecting the first programmed processor.

19. The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the first programmed processor comprises a server providing an intralan resource within the firewall.

20. The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the computer resource comprises  
5 a computer database and the command comprises a database query.

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